

# **CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT**

January 16, 2001

## **SUBJECT:**

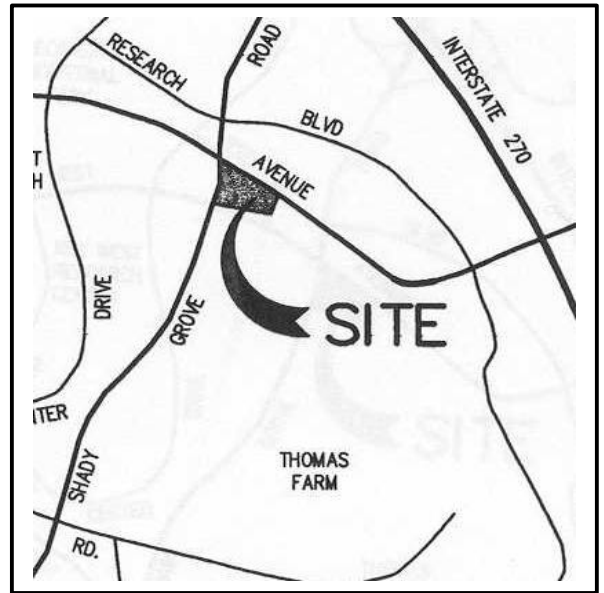
Detailed Application CPD2000-0004J for Comprehensive Planned Development CPD1999-0004, Falls Grove. Application is for a four-story, 55,060 square foot office building.

Applicant: SGPC II, LLC  
c/o Dr. Erik Young  
15001 Shady Grove Road, Suite 350  
Rockville, MD 20850

Owner: Same

Date Filed: October 3, 2000

Location: A portion of the Falls Grove development at the intersection of Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue.



## **REQUEST:**

The applicant seeks detailed (final) approval of a four-story, 55,060 square-foot office building at the above referenced location. The proposed building will be related architecturally to an existing office building directly adjacent to this proposal.

## **PREVIOUS RELATED ACTIONS:**

- CPD99-00004, Concept Plan Application for Comprehensive Planned Development approved by the Mayor and Council, February 22, 2000.
- CDP2000-0004A, Detailed Application for Infrastructure and Roads, Part I. Approved by the Planning Commission on July 26, 2000.
- CPD2000-0004H, Detailed Application for a stormwater management facility and a spur road. Approved by the Planning Commission on September 13, 2000.



- CPD2000-0004B, Detailed Application for 243 units and a community center. Approved by the Planning Commission on September 27, 2000.
- CPD2000-0004D, Detailed Application for 359 multi-family units. Approved by the Planning Commission on September 27, 2000.
- CPD2000-0004E, Detailed Application for Infrastructure and Roads, Part II. Approved by the Planning Commission on October 25, 2000.
- CPD2000-0004F, Detailed Application for the Fallsgrove Village Center. Approved by the Planning Commission on October 35, 2000.
- CPD2000-0004G, Detailed Application for 202 residential units. Approved by the Planning Commission on December 10, 2000.

## **ANALYSIS:**

### **Background**

On February 22, 2000, the Mayor and Council approved CPD99-0004, authorizing development on the former Thomas Farm site, now known as Fallsgrove. The approval authorized a total of 1,530 dwelling units, 150,000 square feet of commercial retail and 950,000 square feet of office/research and development space. A Comprehensive Planned Development is implemented through the approval of individual detailed applications for all or part of a development as required in Section 25-656 of the Zoning Ordinance. This application is part of a series of detailed applications.

### **Property Description**

Fallsgrove consists of approximately 254 acres bounded by Shady Grove Road, Darnestown Road, West Montgomery Avenue and Research Boulevard. This section of Fallsgrove slopes gently from Shady Grove Road towards Gude Drive, and is completely forested.



***Shady Grove Road Frontage***

### **Proposal**

The applicant requests detailed application approval for a four-story, 55,060 square foot office building on this portion of the Fallsgrove site. This request is characterized by an architectural relation to an existing building directly adjacent to this site. The developer of this site is the same



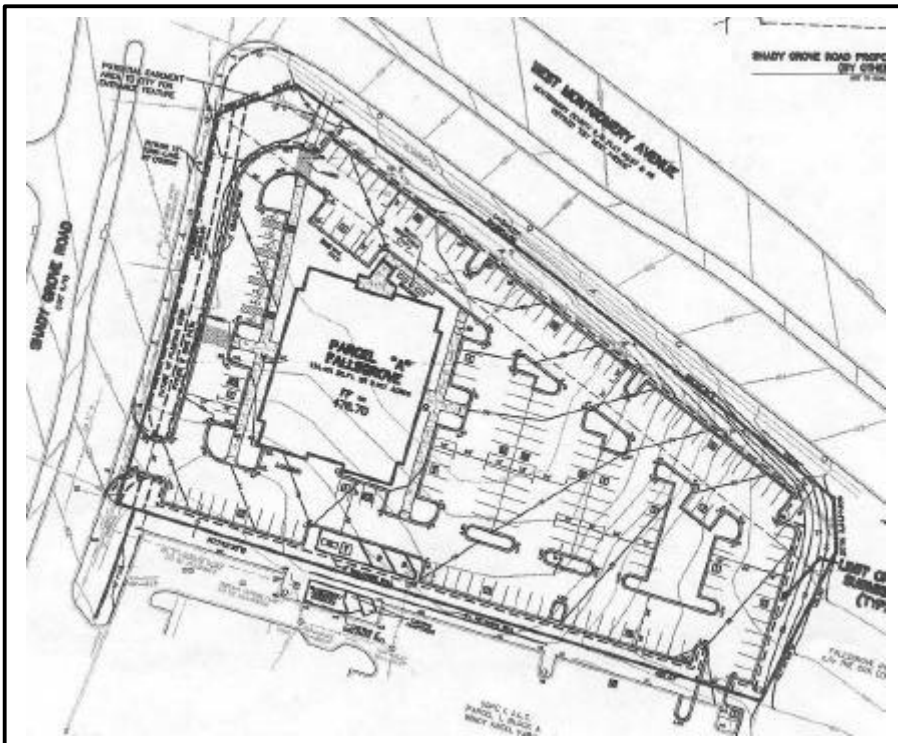
*West Montgomery Ave. Frontage*

developer of the adjacent site, although the ownership is through a different partnership. However, the adjacent building is not part of the Falls Grove CPD. As such, this new proposal is required to contain various conditions as they apply to the Falls Grove CPD. An example is a requirement that the building be as close to the road as practical, a bus stop must be provided, and the site must attain at least 25% green space.

As stated before, this building will be related architecturally to the existing building, but it will not be a mirror image. There will be slight variations in color and façade treatments. The building also will have a distinct presence on West Montgomery Avenue, which will create orientations to both Shady Grove Road, West Montgomery Avenue and the interior of the Falls Grove site. The latter will be accomplished by a formal entrance facing the interior of the Falls Grove site.

### The Site

The development site, which encompasses 2.857 acres, is located on the southwest corner of the Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue intersection. This location was approved for



office/ R&D uses through the approved Falls Grove Concept Plan. While no longer owned by Falls Grove, the site is still required to abide by the terms and conditions of the Concept Plan. The site has a slightly rolling grade upward from the intersection, and is heavily wooded. These trees are to be removed as per the approved Concept Plan.

Access to the site is to be provided via an ingress/egress easement to the rear of this property that connects it to the

aforementioned office building adjacent to the southern end of his site. This existing building is required to provide access to this site and the site to its south as per the conditions of CPD98-003A. The southern site in turn will provide ingress/egress onto the recently approved Wood Hill Road, which is an infrastructure road that is being built by Falls Grove per detailed Application CPD2000-0004E. Grade considerations and the need for a retaining wall along the property boundary, as well as the proximity of the intersection of Wood Hill Road and West Montgomery Avenue facilitate the need for this type of ingress/egress into and off of the site. In addition, there will be an ingress/egress point to the site onto Shady Grove Road.

In addition, TRANSCO has an easement on a portion of this site adjacent to West Montgomery Avenue. This easement will preclude the Applicant from planting significant trees within the easement. The Applicant is working with Staff however to provide acceptable plantings in this area. TRANSCO must approve all plantings in this area.

Another aspect of this site is the corner of Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue. Staff believes that this corner is a prime gateway entrance to the City of Rockville. As such, the Applicant has agreed to dedicate a portion of the corner to the City for gateway signage. In addition, the Applicant will provide significant landscaping on this corner to enhance the visual appearance.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approval is recommended, subject to the following conditions:

1. Submission, for approval by the Chief of Planning, of eleven (11) copies of the site plan, revised according to Planning Commission Exhibit A.
2. Submission, for approval by the Department of Public Works (DPW), of the following detailed plans, studies and computations:
  - a. Stormwater Management (SWM) concept plan.
  - b. Sediment Control plans.
  - c. Public Improvement plans (storm drain and paving, etc).
  - d. Any additional notes on the plans as indicated on Planning commission Exhibit "A".
  - e. Street grades
  - f. Water and sewer, sizing to match overall approved concept.
3. Bonds be posted and permits obtained from DPW and MDE.
4. Submission for the approval of the Chief of Planning, of 11 copies of a Landscape Plan that is revised according to Planning Commission Exhibit B.



5. Occupancy permits will not be issued until Falls Grove Associates constructs the wastewater pump station, wastewater out-fall sewer to the site, and out-fall storm sewer to the site, and DPW accepts these improvements for permanent maintenance and ownership.
6. Permits will not be issued until DPW issues PWK permits for the wastewater pump station, wastewater out-fall sewer, and out-fall storm sewer to Falls Grove Associates.
7. Obtain permit from TRANSCO for work over their transmission main.
8. Three off-site public water system improvements as identified in the June 23, 2000 letter to Cox Companies must be constructed prior to occupancy. Additionally the PWK permit to construct the off-site water improvements must be issued prior to permit issuance on this site.
9. Relocate water meter as shown on the plan. Applicant must connect to existing public sewer on adjacent property.
10. All utility connections and transformers will be placed underground, and connections to the existing offsite utility system must be shown.
11. Provide a bus shelter that is consistent with the Falls Grove Design Guidelines as directed by DPW and County transit services. Cost of shelter must be bonded prior to permit issuance.
12. Revise car pool spaces, handicap spaces, bike rack and access on the northeast corner of the building as indicated on Planning commission Exhibit A.
13. Provide second pedestrian access along West Montgomery Avenue as indicated on Planning Commission Exhibit A.
14. Increase driveway width to 24 feet at the northwest corner and southeast access as indicated on Planning Commission Exhibit A.
15. Provide ingress/egress easement to 15001 Shady Grove Road (existing development) to connect with the easement shown on Exhibit A of CPD98-003A.
16. Applicant will dedicate a portion of the site on the corner of Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue to the City of Rockville for signage.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Traffic**

A traffic study was done as part of the Concept Plan approval, and this application is in compliance with the approved Concept Plan. Mitigation of the traffic impacts were required as part of the Concept Plan. Mitigation measures include the construction of improvements to 12 intersections, construction of a transit center, payment of \$1.6 million for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures, and construction of on-site roads.

Fallsgrove has provided a bond in the amount of \$2.2 million for required off-site traffic improvements, as per the requirements of the Concept Plan. It should be noted that the Resolution of Approval requires that all Phase I off-site road improvements, as outlined within the Resolution on page 26, must be completed within three years of the issuance of the first grading permit.

### **Parking**

The site requires 184 parking spaces, and 185 are being provided. All of the parking is provided in the form of a surface lot, the majority of which is located adjacent to Wood Hill Road.

### **Pedestrian Access and Bicycle Paths**

Pedestrian access will be provided to Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery via delineated and marked access through the site. There is a bike path adjacent to Shady Grove Road. Condition number 13 above also requires the Applicant to provide an additional pedestrian access to West Montgomery Avenue.

### **Transit**

The Concept Plan referenced a multi-modal transit center that was approved through the Detailed Application for the Village Center. The multi-modal center is accessible via pedestrian and bike paths (on and off-street). As per the Concept Plan and condition number 11 above, the Applicant will provide a bus shelter, consistent with the Fallsgrove Design Guidelines, at a location to be determined by the City after consultation with Montgomery County.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

The majority of stormwater runoff will be conveyed to and managed in a regional facility, pond #3 near the intersection of Darnestown Road and West Montgomery Avenue. A portion of stormwater runoff from this site will be handled through various on-site Best Management Practices (BMPs) to satisfy recharge volume requirements.

## **LANDSCAPING**

A landscape plan for this development has been submitted and is under review per the requirements of condition number four (4) noted above. As stated above, any plantings within the TRANSCO easement must be approved by TRANSCO.

### **Forest/Tree Preservation**

See condition number four (4).

### **Equipment Screening**

All transformers or telecommunications equipment is required by the City of Rockville to be placed underground. Any equipment that the applicant proposes to place above ground must be approved in

accordance with the submission and approval of a waiver of the city's underground utility requirements. This waiver must be approved by the City of Rockville Planning Commission.

As part of this application, the Applicant has included a request for a waiver of the underground utility requirement, in order to place a transformer within an enclosure. This enclosure area is indicated on the site plan, and is designated for an emergency generator, dumpsters, and the aforementioned transformer. This enclosure area is located on the southern edge of the site, and is adjacent to a similar facility on the adjacent site. The equipment enclosure will be decorative block surrounded by landscaping. If a waiver is not approved, then the enclosure can be reduced in size with the transformer located underground. If a waiver is approved, then condition number 10 will require modification.

It must be noted that the proposed enclosure area is adjacent to a similar enclosure on the adjoining site that contains a transformer that was approved via a waiver during the approval process of the site.

## STAFF COMMENTS

This application is consistent with the approved Concept Plan, and staff recommends approval subject to the conditions listed earlier. Staff endorses this application as meeting the full intent of the approved Concept Plan and the accompanying resolution.

## NOTIFICATION

Notices were sent to approximately 1,000 residences, businesses and association presidents. Some of the subdivisions include, but were not limited to, Glenora Hills, Rockshire, the Willows, Carter Hill, Watts Branch Meadows, Cambridge Heights, Ivy Woods and Flintledge Estates.

## APPROVAL LIMITATIONS

Section 25-193(d) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that **construction or operation must commence within two (2) years of the date of this decision or application approval shall expire.** If the applicant can show just cause, a maximum of two (2) time extensions may be granted by the Planning Commission, each not to exceed one year. However, time extensions are not automatically approved, and sufficient detail and justification will be required in order for the Planning Commission to consider granting an extension.

## CONCLUSION

Staff finds that this application is consistent with the approved Concept Plan approved by the Mayor and Council for this area of Falls Grove. As a result, staff recommends approval of Detailed Application CPD2000-0004J.

Attachments